



One Nation One Election

08.08.2025

What is it?

"One Nation, One Election" (ONOE) means holding Lok Sabha (national) and all State Assembly elections at the same time, across the whole country, once every 5 years.

Currently, elections happen at **different times** in different states, so there is **some election happening every year**.

What's happening now?

- The government wants to bring ONOE **by 2034**.
- Assemblies elected between 2029–2033 might have **shorter terms** to adjust to the common cycle.
- A **committee led by ex-President Ram Nath Kovind** was formed in 2023 to study this.
- Many political parties have mixed opinions - some support it, some oppose it.

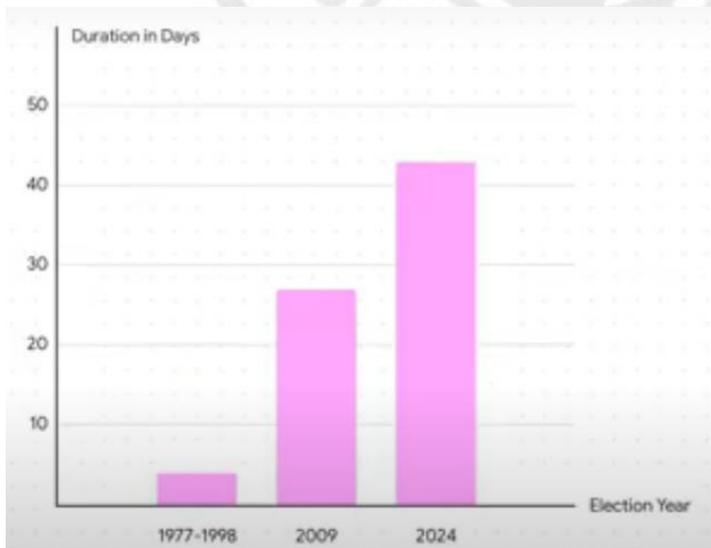
Benefits (Pros)

- Saves **public money**
- Reduces **election fatigue**
- Helps governments **focus on long-term planning**
- Reduces **disruptions** to education, policing, administration

Challenges (Cons)

- Needs **major constitutional amendments**
- What if a government **falls before 5 years**?
- May **weaken federalism** (states' independence)
- Many fear **too much power** in hands of the Election Commission

Benefits of One Nation, One Election



Reduce Electoral Disruption

Reduce Election Frequency

Minimize Expenditure

Streamline Governance



Some estimates put the total cost for just the 2024 national election at 1.35 lakh crore rupees.

Deploying massive numbers of security forces and government officials for weeks on end, multiple times a year, all across the country

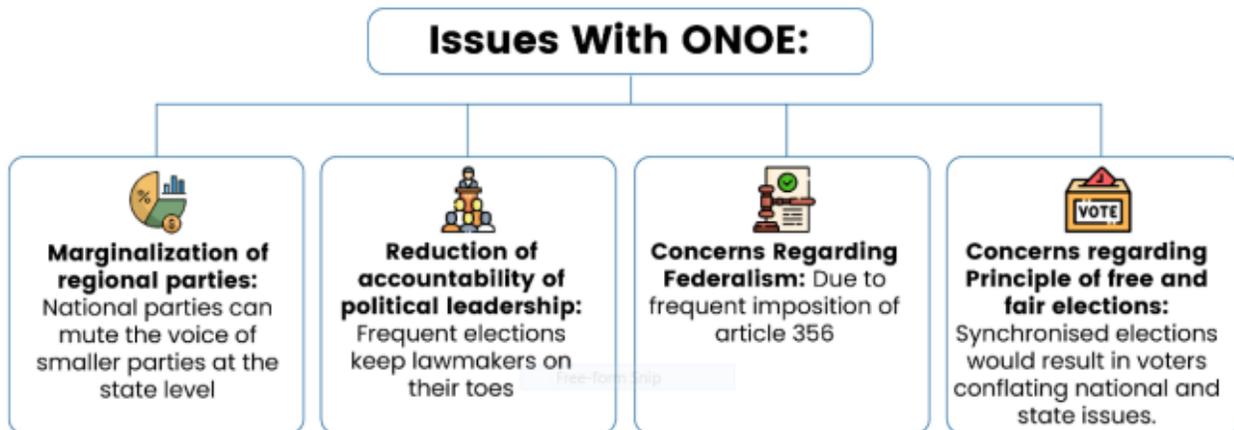
But maybe the most powerful argument you'll hear from supporters is model code of conduct. It's basically a set of rules that stops the government from announcing new schemes or projects. Now, with some part of India almost always in election mode, proponents claim this creates a state of policy paralysis where crucial development work is constantly being put on pause.

But that's only one side of the coin. The critiques of this plan are just as strong, and they really challenge these core assumptions. So, let's flip over to the other side of the debate and look at some of the potential unintended consequences that have critics so worried.

- Critics push back hard on this whole idea that cost and policy paralysis are the main villains. They'll point out that what the government actually spends on elections is a tiny fraction of the national budget. The real problem, they argue, is all the untracked, unaccounted for money in campaign finance, which does nothing to fix.
- And that model code of conduct, they say it doesn't stop ongoing work. And the rules only apply in the specific state that's actually voting, not the entire country.

What experts are saying:

- Former CJs (like J.S. Khehar) warn that **giving too much power to EC** can be risky without clear laws.
- Some economists say ONOE could **boost GDP** by reducing frequent disruptions.
- Opposition parties argue it could be used to **centralize power** and weaken smaller regional voices.



The **Election Commission of India (ECI)** is responsible for conducting **free and fair elections** to the Lok Sabha, State Assemblies, the President and the Vice-President.

Now, what is being proposed under ONOE?

If Lok Sabha and all State Assembly elections are to be held at the same time, the EC will need to manage a much bigger process.

So the government may give **additional powers** to the EC to carry out this complex task.



What extra powers might be given to the EC?

1. Power to Synchronize Elections

The EC may be given the authority to decide **when and how** to conduct simultaneous elections across the entire country.

Earlier, such decisions involved Governors or the President. Now, the EC might coordinate the timing directly.

2. Power to Adjust Terms of Assemblies

If a state government falls early (before completing its 5-year term), the EC may get to decide:

- Should the state be placed under **President's Rule** until the next synchronized election?
- Or should a **temporary arrangement** be made?

This means the EC could decide to **extend or shorten** the term of a state assembly to match the national election cycle.

3. Control over National Election Calendar

The EC may prepare a **nationwide election calendar** and all states will be required to follow it - even if they prefer otherwise.

This could reduce the **independent authority of State Election Commissions**.

4. Stronger Role in Administration and Code of Conduct

The EC will have to coordinate with the central and state governments to:

- Enforce the **Model Code of Conduct** nationwide
- Arrange **policing, security and logistics** for simultaneous elections

This will significantly **increase the EC's central power**.



Who is giving these powers?

These powers can only be given through two main steps:

1. Constitutional Amendments

- The government may need to amend **Articles 83, 85, 172, 356** etc.
- These changes require a **two-thirds majority in Parliament** and approval from **half the states**.

2. New Laws / Amendments to Existing Laws

- The government may amend laws like the **Representation of the People Act, 1951** to give these powers to the EC.

A **High-Level Committee led by ex-President Ram Nath Kovind**, submitted its report to the President of India Draupadi Murmu. This report contains detailed recommendations for implementing "One Nation, One Election".

One Nation, One Election sounds like a smart idea to reduce costs and increase efficiency, but it needs strong planning, public discussion, and political consensus to make it successful without harming democracy

First two decades after independence, national and state elections happened at the same time. But then in the late 1960s, the whole system started to break apart. Some state governments fell, assemblies were dissolved early. It was just the messy, sometimes chaotic and totally unpredictable nature of a parliamentary democracy doing its thing.